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CITY'S ROOF DWELLERS ENJOY MOUNTAIN TOP SOLITUDE WHILE OTHERS SCRAMBLE FOR LIVING QUARTERS BELOW



Sky Bungalow Colony Flourishes in Midst of Housing Famine—Luxurious Homes, Surrounded by Gardens, to Be Found on Top Skyscrapers—Ideal in Summer Time

New Yorkers have taken to living among the clouds. As a result this summer will see the tops of tall skyscrapers dotted with picturesque bungalows surrounded by Italian gardens, pergolas, fountains and all the interesting accessories of a real home in the country. This new race of roof dwellers that has so suddenly sprung up in the heart of old Manhattan, establishing its homes and setting up its household goods so high above the street, is a group of city folk who have the courage to demand a breathing space and a home environment as well as a cool spot where they are forced to spend the summer in town may enjoy the fresh air and freedom usually to be found only at the seashore and mountains.

Incidentally it might be suggested that this fast increasing colony of roof bungalow dwellers undoubtedly represent in a concrete way the rebellion of home folk that has for so long been smoldering against the restrictions of apartment house life in town and the intolerable conditions of the living problem generally. They have upset the whole scheme of modern living by building sky homes of their very own on the roofs, above and beyond all the annoyances that once made life a burden down below.

For Summer and Winter Living.

As a result they are preempting the roofs of skyscrapers and building homes that not only solve the problem of where to go in the summer, but provide comfortable quarters for all the year around living, with steam heat and open fires whenever the weather makes warmth necessary. This may sound chimerical, but the roof bungalow colony of New York, which has supplied itself so generously with all the comforts of home, is by no means a segment of the imagination, but a reality, strange as it may seem.

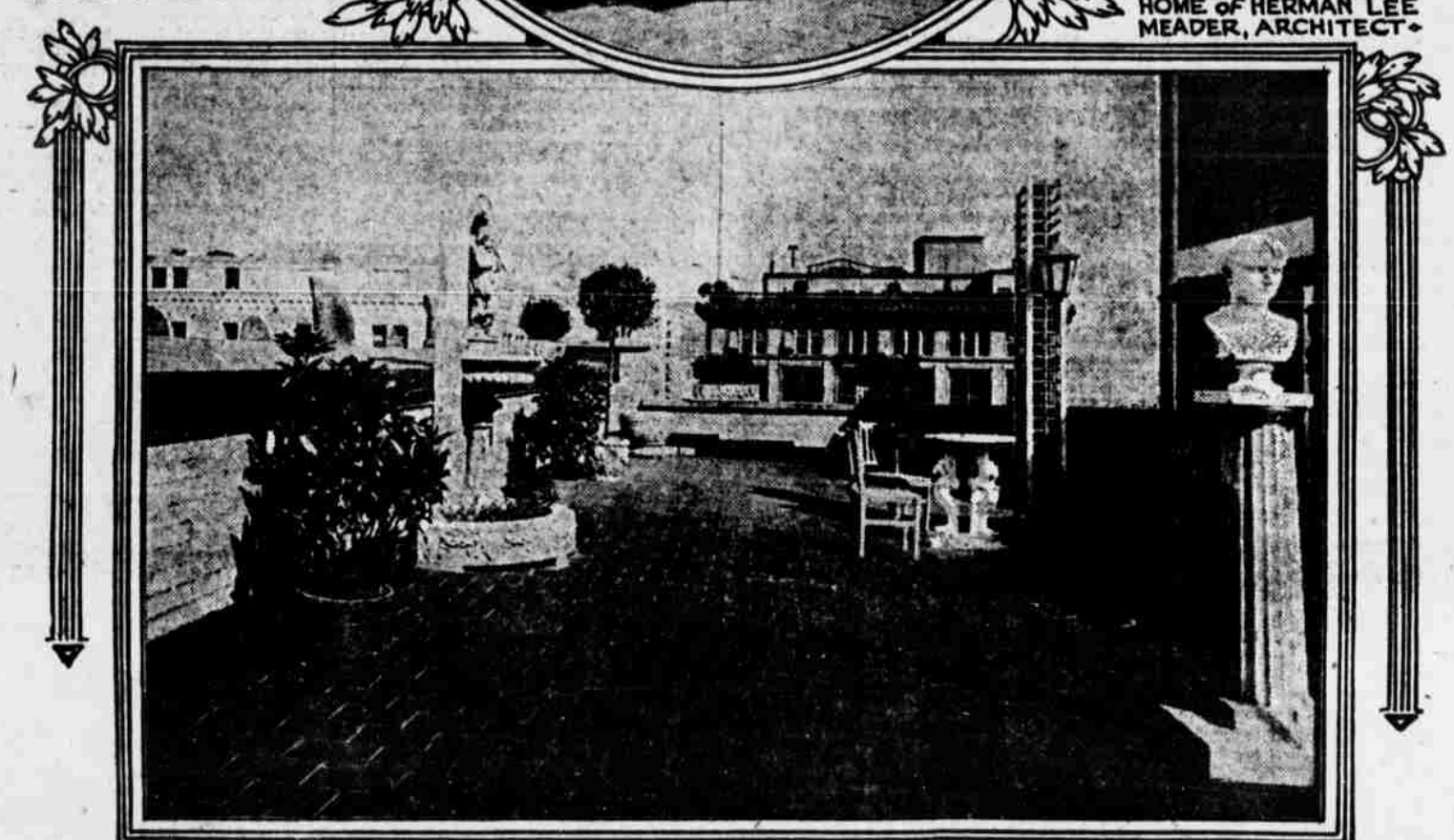
Thomas Hastings of the firm of Carrere & Hastings initiated the idea several years ago when he built a wonderful bungalow home atop the building at 62 Vanderbilt avenue, which he designed and in which his office is located. Since then the notion has grown and developed until to-day there are dozens of not simply shacks erected temporarily to fill a passing need, but real homes, luxurious apartments, even with floor areas covering nearly in some instances 4,000 square feet of space and including seven rooms and three baths that range in price from \$2,000 up to \$25,000.

Not only are the roof bungalows fitted up with every convenience of a real home such as up to date bathrooms and showers, big, old fashioned fireplaces that burn real logs and with ample closet room such as is found as a rule only in country residences, but they are set down in the midst of gardens that rival those of suburban New York, with real grass plots, floral borders and flower

A BACHELOR'S SKY BUNGALOW on the roof of the BERKELEY BUILDING, 19 WEST FORTY-FOURTH STREET.



AN ITALIAN VILLA PERCHED ON THE TOP OF THE BUILDING AT 26 WEST THIRTY-THIRD STREET, ROOF HOME OF HERMAN LEE MEADER, ARCHITECT.



TERRACE OUTSIDE ROOF ATELIER OF WILLIAM H. GOMPERT, ARCHITECT, ATOP THE BURRELL BUILDING AT 171 MADISON AVENUE. ABOVE IN OVAL, ENTRANCE TO THE GOMPERT ATELIER.

beds, fountains and garden seats, sun dials and marble jardiniere, pergolas with singing birds hanging in rustic cages, and invariably a faithful canine sitting in the sun to complete the home picture.

From the Aviator's Viewpoint.

An aviator skimming low over city roofs in the early evening might be hard put to it to account for men in white flannels smoking their evening pipe beside a playing fountain, or women in summer attire tending their flowers or enjoying the cool breezes from beneath a vine covered pergola high up and away from the noise and dust of the city streets.

To adequately describe the beauties of these unique bungalows on New York city roofs is difficult. Nestling into their setting of green among the clouds, they have nothing between them and the horizon, which sometimes stretches away to the hills of Long Island or takes in the blue Hudson and the Palisades of New Jersey. At times it gives one the impression of being on a boat with only the sky and sea as company. Now and then a tall building presses closely, as in the case of Herman Lee Meader's sumptuous home atop the Waldorf Building in West Thirty-third street, where the minarets and gables of the Waldorf-Astoria opposite seem to be part of the same structure. The Hotel Vanderbilt, looming up in the foreground, looks scarcely a block away, and one might almost shake hands with the owner of another roof bungalow on the Burrell Building in between.

When Mr. Meader, the architect who designed the Waldorf Building, was planning its construction he reserved space for his office and for a living suite besides, but as the work progressed the idea occurred to him it would be a capital plan to set up a dwelling on the roof and thus take advantage of all the air and light and freedom such a scheme afforded. Mr. Meader for long been a collector of rare art objects and it seemed just the opportunity he had longed for of providing a real home in which to house his collection. He is now worth \$50,000 and \$10,000 in constructing a concrete bungalow comprising six rooms and two baths, with a sun parlor, a pergola and a lovely garden terrace, 1,600 square feet of roof space besides.

A Complete Apartment in Itself.

The little house which opened by French doors to the sun parlor, capable of being transformed in a jiffy to an outdoor room, is a complete apartment in itself and possesses features which are unusual in even the most expensive of city flats. The entrance from the main public corridor gives onto a tiny vestibule, the walls hung with Oriental wall panels and furnished with a hall

series of lunettes hanging over the four main doors came from a medieval edifice in Vienna and form one of the most striking bits of furnishing in the room. A five foot fireplace with a rich marble mantel and ancient bronze andirons occupies the center of the south end of the salon, and on the chimney breast is a bas relief representing a full size female figure of Victory bearing palm branches, the work of the owner. A grand piano stands between the chimney and the door to the sun parlor, while the section of a choir stall, elaborately carved and illuminated in green and gold after the Italian fashion, occupies a position to the right. Several richly carved pontifical chairs, upholstered in that rare old red brocade valued only seen in the palace of the

Doges or in Florentine or Roman churches, are given positions of honor. Built in book shelves are filled with rare tomes collected on the continent.

Dining Room Done in Oak.

The dining room, lighted by a bay of diamond paned windows, is paneled to the Italian ribbed ceiling with oak, and the Tudor furniture is in the same rich wood. Fine silver sheds its wondrous lustre from the carved side table and a few rare canvases decorate the walls. One guest chamber is richly furnished in a dull blue damask, the ancient four poster being hung and covered with the same handsome material. The owner's room is done in the style of early Colonial days, with old fashioned mahogany furniture, a patchwork quilt on

Some Well Known New Yorkers Have Adopted This Picturesque Mode of Living, Combining Advantages of Country Life With All the Conveniences of the City

West Forty-fourth street, where a business man keeps bachelor hall. Perhaps it is because this little roof bungalow has for twenty years been the dream of its owner that the little menage is so perfect in type, furnishing and appointment. Presided over by a Japanese screen, it not only provides every creature comfort but is exquisitely kept.

Has Real Country Garden.

Occupying considerably more than 1,000 square feet of roof space, the apartment consists of seven rooms and three baths. It is constructed of concrete with brick sills and door trimmings, the woodwork painted apple green, with a roof of red Spanish tile. On one side the parapet, rather decorative in effect, encloses the garden. A green painted lattice with vine covered arbors is on the opposite side. Tubs of privet, orange trees with palms and exotic plants are scattered about the "yard," providing, with the vine covered walls, the effect of a real country garden. Into this tiny quadrangle the French doors of the living room open, and here in comfortable willow chairs the host and his friends may sit and enjoy the cooling breezes that blow in straight from the bay and the ocean.

Perhaps the most interesting features of this bachelor bungalow de luxe are the fireplaces in the living room, dining room and one of the bed chambers, each of which is made to be used and burns real wood, not makeshift gas logs. There are many other notable fittings—big closets, for example, lighted with electric light, and shelves for every need, curious cupboards in the dining room set into the wall and concealed by the oaken paneling that runs from floor to ribbed ceiling. Though small, they are sufficiently commodious for table linen and leave the Tudor side table free for the silver which graces it so delightfully.

A nautical atmosphere pervades the living room, lighted on three sides, which is, perhaps, not strange since the owner is a yachtsman as well as a collector of rare art objects. On one side, ship lanterns used for lighting fixtures, and the various paraphernalia used aboard a boat are noticeable features of this comfortable and airy room. There has been no attempt at decorative furnishing, but the seven room bungalow is as shipshape as a home can be. In fact, it is a very comfortable and as a matter of fact every luxury that a reasonable minded man might wish. In this, as in the other bungalows mentioned, arrangements are made for night service. A watchman is always on hand to run the elevator when the bungalow owner does not happen to be in the building, as in Mr. Meader's case. While the Berkeley Building was designed by Starrett and Van Vleck, the roof bungalow was the work of Arthur C. Jackson and its construction was supervised by J. E. Eaton of the former firm.

On the opposite side of the Berkeley roof is another bungalow, which is occupied by Allan Pinkerton and his family. It consists of five rooms and two baths and covers nearly 2,500 square feet of space. The superstructure was a part of the building proper, but was turned into a living apartment by Starrett and Van Vleck at a cost of between \$5,000 and \$10,000, exclusive of the furnishings. While not so ornate outside, it is delightfully arranged and furnished within. English oak is used for panelling and trim and some interesting built-in furniture has been introduced in the dining room. A long corridor nearly six feet in width which stretches the length of the apartment is hung with the owner's collection of rare English prints, and the furnishings of the bungalow include some fine old Colonial mahogany, not to mention rare Chinese curios picked up from time to time both here and abroad.

Every Modern Convenience.

To give some idea of the size of Mr. Pinkerton's roof bungalow, the living room measures 13x25 feet, with the dining room slightly smaller. It includes every modern convenience and all the charm of environment that is enjoyed in a typical apartment but with the peace and freedom of a country estate.

William G. Gompert, an architect, has set up an atelier as well as a bachelor apartment some 215 feet above the street on the Burrell Building at 171 Madison avenue and has fitted it up with an Italian garden, parapet boxes of flowers, awnings and other decorative features. Mr. Gompert believes that New Yorkers are not just beginning to appreciate the charm of environment that is enjoyed in a typical apartment but with the peace and freedom of a country estate.

A three room, bath and kitchenette apartment on the roof of the Rodin Studios at 200 West Fifty-seventh street has housed a college professor and his wife all winter. Mrs. H. H. Ward, a writer of boys' stories, furnished the apartment and lived in it for awhile, but is now subletting it. Miss Ward has a special gift for fitting up apartments and subletting them, and she has under her control several roof bungalows where the tenants enjoy getting close to nature high up above the noise of the city streets.

At 3 and 5 West Fifty-fifth street is an interesting roof bungalow occupied by two bachelors, Donald Brian, the actor, and Arthur C. Jackson, the architect. It is fitted up on one of a tall skyscraper in East Forty-first street, later subletting it to a tenant. There are acres of similar roof bungalows occupied by men or women which are solving the problem of living in town by providing a home environment that is now impossible in the average city flat.

COMPANY ADOPTS NEW SALES POLICY

Will Dispose of Apartments at Jackson Heights on "Rent Insurance" Basis.

Of great interest to apartment seekers in all sections of New York is the decision of the Queensboro Corporation to sell its old and new houses at Jackson Heights, in the Borough of Queens to tenants under a collective ownership and rent insurance plan that should appeal to those who seek permanency of location and stability of rental conditions.

The first group of houses to be offered under this plan are the colonial apartments at 148 to 154 Twenty-fifth street, "L" division of the Queensboro Corporation, with all night and day service at a five cent fare, via the Queensboro subway to the Grand Central station. By about the end of the current year the new East River and Sixtieth street tunnel will give additional direct service over the B. R. T. line, via Seventy-seventh and Broadway to Brooklyn.

Apartment houses at Jackson Heights are to be offered under the collective ownership plan, with initial payments only \$500 to \$5,000. Under plan A, involving a cash payment of \$5,000, the rents for these six room apartments are immediately reduced to \$25 to \$35 a month, and ownership vested in the tenant immediately the initial payment is made.

Then there are two installment plans, involving the payment monthly for six years of the present apartment rental,

plus the monthly installment and quarterly the interest on the balance owing less the net earnings.

Under plan B, \$1,000 cash, there is to be added to the regular rental \$14 a month for seventy-two months, with 6 per cent interest on unpaid balances added to the rental less the net earnings pro rata.

Under plan C, \$500 cash, there is to be added to the regular rental \$12 a month for seventy-five months, with 6 per cent interest on unpaid balances added to the rental less the net earnings divided pro rata.

"The Queensboro Corporation," says Edward A. MacDougall, president, "decided upon the adoption of the cooperative or collective ownership plan for the sale of its apartment houses, making it possible for a desirable and thrifty class of persons to own their own apartment houses, largely in order to further stabilize the Jackson Heights community and maintain its present high character."

"The plan, which will be extended to all of our new garden type apartments, is in accord with the Government's 'Own Your Own Home' policy, and is thoroughly sound from an economic standpoint, carrying out as it does in a simple, straightforward way any child can understand the idea that now is the order of the day, viz., doing away with unnecessary and unearned profits and bringing the economic necessities of the people direct from producer to consumer."

"It is cooperation of this sort, and along social lines, which has made the Jackson Heights community what it is to-day—the most desirable and best protected apartment house section in the city of New York."

"The plan is our contribution to the organization of business along cooperative lines, which is what has made this country what it is commercially to-day; the richest, most powerful nation on earth, the country where people are better clothed, better fed and better housed, by and large, than anywhere else in the world."



AS THE REAL ESTATE EXCHANGE LOOKED ON TUESDAY, JUNE 10, THE DAY OF THE BENNETT AUCTION.

It was no idle boast that the James Gordon Bennett estate lot sale, held last Tuesday by Joseph P. Day, auctioneer, crowded the Vesey street salesroom as never before. The above mentioned twenty-five lots, which were sold for a total of \$1,000,000, were snapped up as the first lot was about to be offered, shows the statement to have been a true one. The room was literally packed to the point of suffocation, and Vesey street for the first time in many years boasted a waiting list. Chairs were at a premium, and the overflow filtered in one at a time until long after 3 o'clock. Many prospective bidders, arriving too late to get inside the doors, lost the bargain they had determined was to be theirs.

"I warned them in the advertisements to avoid the rush," declared Joseph P. Day yesterday, "because I fully realized this was to be a sale that would go down in history, and it will."

"Now that the sale is over," Mr. Day added, "and everybody is satisfied, it is advisable to repeat what I have so often declared to be a fact; that is, a sale, to be successful, must be generously, properly and persistently advertised and promoted along new and original lines. An unreasonably limited advertising appropriation has killed more than one good sale. The advertising appropriation is the last item of expense which should be reduced in a big auction sale."

"The Bennett sale has again demonstrated the correctness of the contention that bidders can be attracted to an auction sale in and out of season, and despite the condition of the sales market, provided the sale is advertised honestly and conducted in a simple, straightforward, business like way, with full cooperation of the owners and their attorneys."

"No statement should be advertised or made from the stand that cannot stand the light of a strict investigation, and that the auctioneer, owner, agents and attorneys are not prepared to carry out to the very letter."

"Such a sale deserves to be a success, and is a success for the buyer, instant the buying public recognizes in it a genuine opportunity to get a square deal and to make the selling price up to the very moment of the last and final 'fair warning' and knockdown."

"In all my experience—and I have sold approximately \$1,000,000,000 worth of real estate located in all parts of the United States and Canada—I cannot recall a sale that had so many satisfactory features or that ended so happily for all concerned."

URGES AGENCY TO FIX HOUSING STANDARDS

Architect Thinks State Bureau Would Help Conditions.

"What of the old houses in New York?" asked Robert D. Kohn, the architect, at a recent conference on housing under the auspices of the Reconstruction Commission. "Are we going to sit tight and leave them as they are?"

The "old houses" referred to by Mr. Kohn, who was in charge of housing operations for the Emergency Fleet Corporation during the war, when homes for shipyard workers were popping up like mushrooms, are the "old law" tenements on the East Side and elsewhere, which are being deserted by tenants anxious to enjoy better living conditions for themselves and their families.

"Can we tear them down?" continued Mr. Kohn. "Not by the wholesale. I hope that there will be organized a conference on housing in New York to see if some of these old buildings can be saved. I know that some of them must be razed. In case of the 'dumbbell' apartments I am very sure that if every third house in a row were torn down decent houses could be made of some of them."

"If New York had an appropriation of \$100,000,000 for housing it wouldn't know what to do with it. We have got to create an agency for making standards. Some State agency should be called into existence to set up standards for housing."

"Do something with the 75,000 rotten tenements which we have. Two and a half millions of people live under conditions which cannot be improved. A study should be made of standards, so if we get a constitutional amendment permitting the State to raise money for building homes we will be ready."

SAYS LANDLORD HAS HIS TROUBLES TOO

Tenant Should Not Monopolize All the Sympathy, Says Bronx Bank Head.

From the point of view not of a real estate agent but of Dr. C. Albert Becker, president of the Bronx Borough Bank, the present situation of tenants in New York apartment houses is not one which should excite particular commiseration—especially in the Bronx.

"I do not think the tenants are any worse off than they ever were; I think they are better off," declared Dr. Becker in discussing the housing situation. "They are earning more wages, and in many instances two families go into one apartment."

"Do you think that is desirable?" he was asked.

"No; but they do it. They do not go down on the lower East Side but onto the Bronx. There are plenty of vacant apartments on the lower East Side."

And Dr. Becker, old of a recent visit to his office who complained that he had been unable to rent for months on the East Side, whereas he had no difficulty whatever in finding tenants for all of his buildings in The Bronx.

"The trouble is," Dr. Becker went on, "that the Bronx has better apartments, better streets, better sewerage—better everything."

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